

ALPHORN VIDEO BEVERAGE ADVERTISEMENTS

A DISSERTATION

SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE SCHOOL

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS

FOR THE DEGREE

DOCTOR OF ARTS

BY

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## **ABSTRACT**

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This dissertation is a creative project that produced animated music video advertisements for my beverage company's product line. The project combines my interests in alphorn performance with entrepreneurial studies. I created and designed a beverage brand, developed award winning recipes, screen printed glass bottles, registered a trademark and promoted my brand throughout the business creation process. I utilized a Hasselblad medium format digital camera to photograph the images, digitally drew, inked, painted, airbrushed and animated the conceptual alphorn video advertisement campaigns. I performed and recorded solo alphorn tracks outdoors in a bird filled hardwood forest on the outskirts of Detroit, Michigan. Through this creative project I shared my story, strategically created alphorn video advertisements and recorded a part of my creative process in writing, sound and video recordings. I created and shared improvised alphorn sound signatures and brand experiences with clients and partners.

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MUNCIE, INDIANA  
MAY 2020



*for Calvin and Irina*

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With my sincerest gratitude, I would like to thank every single person and organization who ever encouraged and supported me in pursuing a professional path as a musician, visual artist, creative thinker and entrepreneur. With your help, I continue to improve myself as a human being. With your profound love, I work to develop and generate value for society.

From 1996-1998, I worked as a civilian cook for the United States Air Force in Kaiserslautern, Germany. During this time, I was fortunate to meet and study horn with Mr. Charles Tibbetts. We enthusiastically bartered food for horn lessons; my efforts to combine food and music continue to today.

I would like to thank Dr. Mike Goldsby for allowing me the opportunity to participate in business classes at Ball State University. I started where I stood, I diligently applied myself, and I produced a business that solves problems for others.

I would like to thank Prof. Gene Berger who contacted me as I worked, performed and taught horn and middle school band in Montana and for encouraging me to apply to Ball State University. I feel that my experiences at Ball State will help to serve me throughout the rest of my life.

I would like to thank Dr. Robert Willey for serving as my dissertation advisor, for his valuable direction, support and for encouraging me to apply to the Ball State entrepreneur pre-seed fund. With his encouragement, I applied and successfully received a grant for my business while finishing my doctoral dissertation. With funding and support from the Ball State University grant, I had the Presto Kombucha® Original profile laboratory analyzed to include a standard commercial food nutrition panel on the

bottle. Receiving the Ball State grant fulfilled a lifelong goal of offering a commercial nutrition panel for my beverage clients.

In Memoriam: Dr. John Seidel, your advice, patience, wisdom, excellence and love have made a massive difference in my life. Thank you.

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

This dissertation is a creative project producing animated music video advertisements for my beverage company's product line. The project combines my interests in performance with entrepreneurial studies. The alphorn is a Swiss folk instrument, however, continues to be embraced and performed by soloists and ensembles around the world (Vignau, 2013). Through this creative project I will share my story, create commercial alphorn video advertisements and record a part of my creative process in writing, sound and video recordings. I intend to create and share memorable alphorn inspired sound signatures and brand experiences with clients and partners.

#### **Problem Statement**

Presto Kombucha® requires video advertisements in order to communicate with clients and build brand equity. Through exploring, documenting and exchanging information with musicians, entrepreneurs and others, this creative project will help me to share my story. The project offers the reader insight into the creative process of a student entrepreneur and founder of a commercial beverage brand. The reader will have an opportunity to examine and explore the workflow of a creative risk taker.

I have performed on the alphorn since 2012. Through performing and teaching alphorn, I have found that the instrument and sound are effective in communicating with others. The alphorn is a part of my daily meditation and is an integral element in my creative process and entrepreneurial story. Effective entrepreneurs share his or her story with the world, and this creative project helped me share my story with the world.

### **Statement of Purpose**

I created and documented nine, three-second cinematic video alphorn beverage advertisements. Each advertisement consists of a series of three alphorn sounded tone combinations creating a collection of signature sounds for my brand. The project produced nine succinct signature sounds, and I employ the signature sounds that generate the most positive and fun feedback. The advertising campaigns are titled after nine proprietary branded flavor profiles, including: Ginger, Lavender Hops, Blueberry Oolong, Cherry Vanilla, Espresso, Orange Jasmine, Rose, Lemon Lime and Original. Each advertisement presentation offers crossmodal value for clients.

For purposes of this creative project, a crossmodal experience is produced during any event involving more than one simultaneous sensory input. A crossmodal experience might involve a musician playing a piece of music while visualizing a mountainous backdrop. A crossmodal experience might involve handling a screen printed glass bottle and simultaneously drinking a refreshing beverage while writing words to describe the experience. Crossmodal awareness might offer an artist the opportunity to create limitless content with an increasingly fresh and creative approach.

In fall 2014, I launched Presto Kombucha at Indy's Kitchen in downtown Indianapolis. Indy's Kitchen is a kitchen incubator with approximately 2,000 square feet of shared workspace. I bootstrapped a commercial brewery by renting one shelf of dry space and one shelf of cooler space in this location. I purchased used Cornelius Kegs and began storing as much kombucha as possible. I rented a pallet of additional cooler storage space at a local food service business, and I began to solicit and sell kombucha



commercially when I managed to have around fifty kegs of product stored at that location.

The response to Presto Kombucha has been tremendous. We partnered on the launch of the first multiple draft kombucha bars to market in Indiana (Edible Indy, 2015). We work with businesses throughout the state and have brought draft kombucha to a number of new locations in Indiana, including city food cooperatives and markets with media recognition in South Bend (South Bend Tribune, 2016), Bloomington (Bloomingtonfoods, 2016), Goshen, and Evansville area (Evansville Courier, 2016) downtown Indianapolis (Indianapolis City Market, 2017) and beyond. Presto Kombucha is honored to partner with The Café at The Newfields International Museum of Art in Indianapolis, where one may enjoy a selection of fine art inspired screen printed Presto Kombucha bottles and experience a subjective crossmodal museum and kombucha drinking environment (Newfields, 2020).

The recording equipment used for the project was a Hasselblad H5D-40 medium format digital camera with a Hasselblad HC100mm f2.2 lens and a stereo pair of Neumann microphones. I edited the recorded alphorn sound files digitally in Audacity. I recorded the tracks using two instruments: a wooden alphorn crafted by William Hopson in Canada, and a carbon fiber telescopic “Alp Flying Horn” crafted by Roger Zanetti in Switzerland. I played a wooden mouthpiece crafted by William Hopson on both instruments. Both instruments are pitched in the key of F and are consequently twelve feet in length similar to the open F horn on a modern valve horn. The traditional Swiss Alphorn is traditionally performed in F# and this key produces a special timbre. I feel playing an alphorn pitched in F is a different crossmodal (See Appendix A) experience

from playing in F#, and both keys are significant for musical study. The key of F# offers an entirely different horn playing experience and tonal center for the listener. A subjective crossmodal experience exists when a circumstance or situation combines more than one modality or sensory perception (See Appendix A).

I edited images in the Hasselblad *Phocus*, Corel *Painter*, *Blender* and *VideoPad* software. I designed, drew, inked, painted and airbrushed the conceptual video based alphorn advertisement campaigns with Corel *Painter*, a Wacom tablet and a Wacom digital airbrush. I recorded audio using a stereo pair of Neumann KM-184 Microphones, Macintosh computer and monitor, Focusrite *Forte* interface, an external hard drive and compact flash card. I used a Flashpoint flash trigger and two strategically placed Godox TT600 Speedlites in a light-sealed room. I formatted the files for computers and mobile devices and chose a 1:1 square frame for formatting. I produced my marketing content in a systematic manner, and creatively applied my research in the culmination of nine tangible commercial product advertisements for Presto Kombucha.

## CHAPTER 2

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Throughout human history, the primary means of sharing new thoughts and information has been through social networks (Standage, 2013). Organizations are established and improved upon through effective communication and social media either enable or hinder a firm's value offerings in the market (Leonardi, Huysman and Steinfield, 2013).

## **History of Advertising and Social Media**

An examination of the history of humanity and historical time periods provide an underlying framework to conceptualize the history of advertising and social media. The exact dates of the first advertisement are uncertain (Ryan, 2017). Ancient through modern social media channels share several similarities of construction and style including setting a general communicative stage or environment where information is passed from person to person and shared through communities and networks of people (Standage, 2013). Trademarks and mottos were utilized to differentiate and identify offerings from Greek potters in the Iron Age (Beard, 2017). The Egyptians used papyrus for handbills and posters. The ancient peoples of Carthage, Rome and Pompeii publicized social events and shared event details with others in writing (Ryan, 2017). Early newspapers in 17<sup>th</sup> century England contained advertisements that provided a taste of early modern mass-media advertising (IBID). In 51 B.C., the Roman public speaker, philosopher, attorney and statesman Marcus Tullius Cicero (106 BCE-43 BCE) networked in a sophisticated documented fashion with correspondents despite living in a time without paper or printing presses. Communication with associates included written letters produced from papyrus rolls (see Appendix A), systematic aural, messenger and letter based correspondences with others around the world which resulted in a tangible and documented network of social communication and connection (Standage, 2013).

## **World Wide Web**

A coevolution of media has historically existed with any population that uses them and any economy that requires media creation. A vibrant new communicative force formed for society in 1991 with the invention of the World Wide Web. Technological

networks lay the foundation for the World Wide Web and combine to provide a medium where humans interact (Fuchs, Hofkirchner, Schafranek, Raffl, Sandoval, Bichler, 2010). Large commercial developers such as Amazon, AOL and Google used Web 1.0 to usher in a commercialized system (IBID). As the World Wide Web evolves, communicative platforms evolve and global online platforms incentivize humans to connect.

As technology develops so does the user value experience. Web versions continue to evolve and platform changes affect the user experience. Web 2.0 invites online user generated content and participation. Tim O'Reilly popularized Web 2.0 during a mastermind brainstorm in 2004 (O'Reilly, 2005). A major problem presented by Web 2.0 social media culture to artists exists in sustaining creativity, navigating a constantly changing digital landscape and continued vitality (Manovich, 2009).

### **Digital Advertising**

It makes sense to view advertising as an autonomous social system because it follows neither the values of the traditional economic system or any system of traditional media exclusively (Zurstiege, 2010). Digital advertising brings forth massive daily changes in advertising and ensures an ever-evolving future practice and structure of global advertising. Changes in advertising practice are so rapid that new ways of looking at advertising must be considered. Continuing pressures for profitability drive digital advertising to grow out of commercial activities on the Internet. Businesses necessity to rationalize markets causes them to be prominently involved with shaping media systems (Hamilton, 2017).

## Music

Background music in advertisements has the potential to increase communication effectiveness (Alpert, 2005). In advertisements, emotional response, intention of purchase and purchase attitude can all be positively or negatively impacted when an appropriate and effective musical score has been paired with an advertisement (Morris and Boone, 1998). Background music that ends suddenly or unexpectedly is a distraction of attention, when measured against background music that has a predictable sounding ending. Advertisements that end with faded dominant cadences and chords distract client's attention less than advertisements that end suddenly or unexpectedly (Guido, 2016).

Repetition's influence on communication efficacy is a significant value topic and issue for general study (Campbell, M. and Keller, K. 2003). Establishing and strategically implementing advertising campaigns within a planned time period is a common method utilized to improve communication efficacy between brands and clients (Laroche, M., Cleveland, M., Maravelakis, I., 2006). Depending on a client's resources required to process an advertising message, marketing repetition demands will vary (McQuarrie, and Mick, 2009). The use of musical-note repetition in Respighi's *Fountains of Rome*, Schubert's *Die Schöne Müllerin* and Debussy's *La Mer* convey a sense of water-like fluidity; a smooth and continuous underlying motion that marketers creatively connect with images and utilize in beverage advertisements (Kellaris, Cox and Cox, 1993).

Tempo affects the overall mood state and the consequent emotions conjured by humans from listening to music (Stewart and Koh, 2017). Negative cognitions might happen less frequently when tempo is increased (Kellaris and Rice, 1993). Brisk tempos

generally communicate a feeling of happiness in advertisements (Bruner, 1990). Tempo is an important compositional element that contributes to the efficacy of musical compositions and music based advertisements. Slow tempo, low dynamic musical segments should achieve less attention whereas loud and fast music should expect to achieve more attention (Kellaris, Cox and Cox, 1993).

Brand based sound signatures began appearing in the 1950's. For decades, NBC has featured a three-note motif played on a chime. Netflix utilizes a creative three-note motif in their signature sound. Ricola utilizes a simple three-note figure that is effectively repeated and played at a higher interval. Intel utilizes a simple 5-note pattern that is instantly recognizable. AT&T features a basic and effective 4-note sound signature. T-Mobile offers a simple and vibrant 5-note theme for their famous sound signature. My plan for creating my sound signatures is inspired by major corporations. I decided to keep my videos brief at three seconds and I decided to limit the musical content to three alphorn tones. I intended to create brief, efficient and memorable sound signatures.

### **Alphorn History and Advertisements**

Musical beverage advertising featuring the solo alphorn is limited or nonexistent. The Swiss Ricola® cough drop brand celebrates an alphorn ethos in famous video commercials. One Ricola commercial features two alphorn players, dressed in traditional Swiss attire, standing atop a mountain, in front of the famous *Zermatt* or Swiss Matterhorn, simultaneously playing and singing descending unison intervals. The Ricola commercial offers highly effective branding, featuring striking scenes of the Swiss mountains in the background and a jodeler and alphorn player making music together in the foreground. There is a continuous association of Alphorn and jodeling dating from the

ninth century to today (DeMers, 1993). Another Ricola commercial offers a trio of alphorn players acting in dialogue with a speaker. Ricola has an immediately recognizable brand identity with extraordinary video commercials featuring the unique ambience and attitude of traditional Swiss culture. The visual and sound qualities of Ricola commercials offer a unique brand experience. Ricola's use of the alphorn alongside other Swiss instruments and scenes of Swiss culture is a cultural value addition for the Swiss people and to the company's cough drop offerings.

Regarding several personal accounts and observations performing alphorn and teaching three separate international summer horn and alphorn master classes from 2012-2014 "High in the Alps" in Graechen, Switzerland; the Swiss government appeared to embrace the alphorn at that time. I feel that the alphorn is inseparably linked with the people of Graechen. I have performed as an alphorn soloist and ensemble member at government sponsored events and at times where thousands of people were in attendance. I experienced an intense sense of connection and empathy with the local Swiss people and performers, and a feeling of connectivity and empathy with all of the alphorn players around the world.

### **Music Marketing Research**

Online social media services allow contributors to share and openly create music in ways that were previously inconceivable (Park, Park and Park, 2018). The invention of the internet has impacted the music business on a primary level with effects observed in the changing significance of record companies, modern copyright challenges and the diversification of the collective commercial music industry. The music industry's fundamental goal is to increase the financial bottom-line through the exchange of

valuable musical based commodities and services in the markets that they serve (Meler and Škoro, 2013). Music may serve multiple capacities and have several outcomes when utilized in advertising. Advertising music might at times request consideration, communicate valuable information about a product, impact memory, and inspire positivity or tranquility (Alexomanolaki, Loveday and Kennett, 2007).

Multimedia based musical presentations are an effective tool that influences clients' perceptions in multiple ways, however, music's impact on product advertising have been studied minimally. Advertising music must be chosen and implemented conscientiously because it commands consideration, relays conscious and sub-conscious communication about a product offering including service, elicits emotions, and aids in the retention of brand values (Zander, 2006). The level of involvement (cognitive vs. affective) with an advertisement presentation influences brand feeling formation (Park, and Young, 1986).

Affective positioning (involving moods, feelings and attitudes) of aesthetic evaluations may all be influenced by the intricacy of the music when assessed by musicians and non-musicians (Jaśkiewicz, Francuz, Zabielska-Mendyk, Zapala, Augustynowicz, 2016). Marketers and advertisers may explore pairing commercials with excellent channels of programming and consider the program's popularity and the popularity of the programs content. The most popular advertisement often extracts and connects with the most positive emotions (Coulter, 1998).

When considering a system for music's capability to communicate overall advertisement significance with background music, compatibility must exist between the music and the message (Kellaris, Cox and Cox, 1993). Background music might affect



purchase intention and client mood and possibly without affecting a client's intervening cognitions (Alpert and Alpert, 1989). With even a single unconscious exposure to a product advertisement, "crossmodal conditioning" can successfully alter consumer response (Vermeulen and Beukeboom, 2016). Crossmodal effects featuring sound have been assessed in several purchasing situations. Sound could have an impact on product selection when a client is faced with various tasks such as selecting a product from a vending machine that is directly next to another vending machine. Client's preferences could be influenced by crossmodal stimuli (Shen and Sengupta, 2013). Beverage color can have an impact on the perceived taste intensity and smell expectations of a product. Color has been shown to interact with and influence various elements of a beverage experience including perceived taste, intensity and odor (Zellner and Durlach, 2003). Literature contains multiple citing's supporting the effects of color on human awareness and conduct (Guéguen, 2003).

Combining a beverage brand with favorably rated musical artists produces a unique musical video experience with positive attitudes toward that brand (Schemer, C. Matthes, J., Wirth, W., Textor, S. 2008). Even when offering a small amount of product information, advertisements regularly depend on music and additional entertaining elements (Stewart and Koh, 2017).

### **Presto Kombucha**

Blue Ocean value exists when a brand creates new demand, enters new market space and consequently creates a new and unique situation for significant growth and profit (Kim and Mauborgne, 2005). Advertisements and brands offer increased awareness and recall value from the effective application of creativity (Lehnert, Till, Carlson, 2013).

Art students with a strong inherent internal volition were shown to rate subjective work more favorably than those with an extrinsic motivational paradigm. Internally motivated art students generally view his or her work as play and as a series of fun and challenging tasks to complete. Consequently, internally motivated artists exhibit positive emotions related to approval and enjoyment of artistic activities. Artistic solutions derive in part from idea evaluation, and this positive or negative evaluative process determines if a subjective creative paradigm is acted upon and implemented (Stanko-Kaczmarek, 2012). From a statistical point of view research completed related to social contract theory revealed that individuals in new organizations with an inherent communitarian paradigm contrasted with an inherent individualistic paradigm did not show any signs of decreased involvement in self-evaluation (Goldsby, 1998). Products that contain art when compared to otherwise identical products without art had an advantage in client's product evaluation (Hagtvedt and Patrick, 2008).

Modern times have seen a massive conceptual marketing transformation. Scholars have no choice other than to direct attention on brands instead of products (Toppano and Toppano, 2014). Globalization is creating a market situation where strategies in communication and marketing are increasingly needed to communicate unique product attributes to consumers (Rompay, Fransen and Borgelink, 2013).

Generally speaking, consumers lack a designer's thinking paradigm. Consumers often do not know how to communicate visual ideas and are likely to view a designer's intentions differently than intended. A client's aesthetic reaction to product attributes is positively influenced by product style (Schnurr and Stokburger-Sauer, 2016).

The brand name Presto Kombucha literally translates to “quick” kombucha. Brand naming solutions are one of the biggest value offerings that marketers provide, and research completed in sound symbolism provides a significant supporting connection between a given sound and implied or explicit intention (Klink and Wu, 2014).

### **Market Research**

Kombucha is an ancient bubbly tea that has been crafted and consumed by humans for thousands of years. My story with the beverage goes back to 2008 when I enjoyed a bottle at an International Horn Society symposium in Denver, Colorado; I realized that I had found a wonderful alternative to soda. I left Colorado and returned to my horn playing jobs in Montana, and I immediately began researching recipes and methods of production. Between 2008 and 2015, I traveled throughout the United States and several cities in Europe where I specifically sought out every local brand that I could possibly experience. I began recording and studying scientific measurements of my own beverages, formulating and testing written recipes. I studied important production variables including the effects of heating and cold steeping and their impacts on my beverage profiles including specific organic tea variety and tea source. I researched sugars and contacted fair trade organic sugar distributors in South America and California and as many feasible U.S. based suppliers as possible. I studied and purchased commercial cold-pressed juicers at auctions and on eBay. I drove to New Jersey to purchase two commercial coffee roasters from a coffee house (we roast a Fair Trade Organic Ethiopian Sidamo bean for our kombucha espresso and nitro espresso profiles), and I acquired other relevant equipment and supplies for commercial beverage manufacturing. I converted our coffee roasters to temporarily operate on propane instead

of natural gas. Presto Kombucha is constantly building upon our relationships with our clients and suppliers, and we are constantly looking for the highest quality and most cost effective ingredients and methods of production.

### **Screen Printing**

Artistic energy and creative design are central to the Presto Kombucha brand experience. Persuasive marketers are convinced of the value of art and art's value to impact client's awareness (Hagtvedt and Patrick, 2008). Serigraphy (screen printing) is the process of using a screen mesh and a stencil to release ink onto a given substrate (Abbott, 2008).

Global trends reveal increasing value significance for startups. Startups must produce consistently excellent work and continue to grow. Technological advances have brought about an environment of extraordinary change and innovation (Kim, Kim & Jeon, 2018). Creating and offering new products is a common practice used by brands to increase sales and differentiate unique offerings (Nowlis and Simonson, 1996). A brand's diversity in character and content will reveal that firm's favorable and profitable value offerings in the market (Brito and Brito 2012).

Underdogs are widespread in commerce with family businesses offering value in the same markets as massive international corporations (Jun, Sung, Gentry, McGinnis, 2015). Even though we are kombucha pioneers in Indiana, Presto Kombucha has always been an underdog in the global market. People enjoy an element of uncertainty and will have positive feelings when an uncertainty is effectively presented and resolved (Ruan, Hsee, and Lu 2018). Uncertainty has a quantitatively massive effect regarding entrepreneurial and corporate firm based business innovation (Caggese, 2012).

When promoting products, visual artwork incorporation is suggested as a luxurious value offering (Huettl and Gierl, 2012). When advertising in print form, brands must attract and retain the attention of a viewer so that an advertisement may have a chance of commanding contemplation and consideration (Hutton and Nolte, 2011). Increasing numbers of producers of premium and ultra premium-priced wine are committed to differentiating brand offerings through screen-printed bottle offerings. California wine country and bay-area based bottle printers Bergin Glass Impressions and Monvera Glass Décor continue to invest millions to manage a rush of demand for printing excellence (Quackenbush, 2014). Visual art design infused with products is an effective luxury offering for society. Selected art featured on product-offerings does not have to be content specific in order for the brand to effectively communicate a visual undertone of sheer magnificence (Hagtvedt and Patrick, 2008).

While completing doctoral course work at Ball State University, I taught myself how to screen print in my basement and thus began the Presto Kombucha screen-printed bottle experience. From beverage to fine art packaging, Presto Kombucha aspires to provide the highest quality kombucha experience for our clients. While in Muncie, I noticed a lack of distinction in commercial kombucha packaging and labels. I decided that it would satisfy my values best to design and screen-print our own bottles in house. Presto Kombucha custom designs and screen-prints cylindrical bottles for several retail clients. At time of writing, we offer multiple profiles in four standard amber colored bottle sizes ranging from 8oz, 16oz, 32oz, and 64oz. Presto Kombucha is currently developing an exclusive private label partnership with a wellness centered client in Chicago, Illinois. Value co-creation might have a positive effect on social enterprises

(Ge, Xu, and Pellegrini, 2019). Some of our flavor profiles include Presto Kombucha Raw Cold Brew Original, Ginger, Lavender Hops, Blueberry Oolong, Cherry Vanilla, Rose, Apple Jasmine, Orange Jasmine, Guayusa, Espresso, Lemon Lime and many more.

I was initially overwhelmed by the complexity of printing ink directly onto glass bottles. There is an enormous amount of do-it-yourself trade information that I learned and applied to produce beautiful and consistent serigraphs. I flew to Idaho and took part in a one-day training session at a workshop by a machine manufacturer that was willing to serve as my supplier and advisor of required screen-printing equipment and supplies. This manufacturer allowed me to purchase components that matched the used manual bottle-printing machine that I purchased on eBay. Presto Kombucha currently utilizes semi-automatic bottle printing equipment. The training day fueled my confidence in my vision and inspired me to continue the rigorous journey of mastering the glass bottle serigraph. I enjoy printing on glass because it is a massive challenge. I enjoy knowing that the quality of packaging that my company produces is exceptionally high. Artistic packaging inspires me to improve the brand quality every day.

In order to add a beautiful wet bottle appearance to a photographed bottle, a product photographer might choose to use a mixture of glycerin and water sprayed on the bottle with a squirt bottle or eyedropper. One might mix water and glycerin at different concentrations and build-up the layers one at a time. This method is especially effective with packaging that offers paper labels because the paper labels often cannot hold up to much moisture stress and the paper labels could deteriorate under the rigors of a photography session using real water and ice. Screen printed bottles are fantastic for photographing in the studio because the ink is printed directly on the bottle, and the

packaging can withstand multiple wet-dry sessions without degrading the visual quality of the packaging images. Artificial Acrylic ice is often used in commercial beverage photography. The artificial ice is helpful because it does not melt and offers a photographer creative options when planning out lengthy photo sessions in the studio.

To the best of my knowledge, Presto Kombucha is the first and only commercial kombucha brand in the world that designs and screen-prints bottles in house as part of a vertically integrated (See Appendix A) brand offering. Since launch, Presto Kombucha has secured interstate distributors, successfully juried into Indiana Artisan (Indiana Artisan, 2019), awarded “Best Kombucha” 2017 by Indianapolis Monthly, awarded “Best of Show” at the Indiana Artisan Marketplace 2018 (see Bibliography for a web link to an interview with Susan Mintert of Indiana Home Cooks following the event, 2018) developed regional sales and established continuing retail chain rebuys east to downtown Cleveland and Cincinnati, Ohio and Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. At time of writing, Presto Kombucha partners with retail draft kombucha accounts as far as Chicago, Illinois and produces kombucha commercially from a shared kitchen incubator space in Carmel, Indiana (see Bibliography for web link to a brand feature by Adam Aasen in Current in Carmel, 2016).

## CHAPTER 3

### DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Entrepreneurial and information system researchers seek to produce valuable and fresh content that offers a scholarly and research based approach (Ponelis, 2015). Clearly stated research objectives indicate that a broad technical research approach has been executed. (Barnes, J., Buckland, B., Brancheau, J., 1992). The purpose of this creative

project is to advance the understanding existing in the area of research related to alphorn sound and social media beverage brand advertisements. By utilizing qualitative research methods, researchers explore how people view their internal conceptual realities, find significance and consider extrinsic paradigms, explain and understand experiences (Merriam, 2009).

Research perspectives in social media are varied and broadly contrasting. Popular social media platforms remain unclassified, and unique definitions of what defines social media research exist amongst researchers in social media (Weller, 2015). Integrating the words social with media connotes a user based communal and social platform experience. Social media may be viewed as automated social networks and systems derived from user based experiences and from people who value being connected (Van Dijck, 2013).

Research setting/context: The field research took place during several spontaneous online sampling sessions throughout spring semester 2020. Research sample and data sources: The data set for the study consisted of written responses taken during the listening sessions.

The project contains a total of nine still photographs. The nine videos each contain one photograph and has a three second zoom on each photo video gaze cue (Hutton and Nolte, 2011). The photographs were taken with a standard product portrait booth setup. Primary lighting remained in front of the object and supplemental lighting behind. A white backdrop was utilized in each of the bottle shots. In order to maintain continuity with the photo sessions, I shot all of the photographs with the same studio setup. I then took the RAW camera images and digitally processed them through the software workflow as notated below. Once the processed files were selected, edited and



uploaded to a *Blender* sequence, I uploaded the sound files and synchronized the sound files with the photograph images.

Patterns and theme identification are essential qualities of an analysis (Bloomberg and Volpe, 2012). An inductive qualitative data analysis will provide an opportunity for the development of patterns; categories and themes will emerge that contains tangible research value. It is important to analyze the data as it is being collected because it encourages analysis and connectivity with a unique system of information and data (Merriam, 2009).

Bar graphs may be used to plot data in qualitative research. Attitudinal responses could be recorded and plotted on a 5-point scale. Sociologists and anthropologists describe a valuable respondent to a survey as an individual who exchanges valuable information with another individual. An effective informant might have a connection with the research process to the extent that he or she could demonstrate empathy for the interviewer and the data collection process (Merriam, 2009).

The recognition of beauty and excellence are the hallmarks of an aesthetic experience, and sincere appreciation comes from combining visual and multiple senses in a collective experience (Krishna, Elder, and Caldara, 2010). Substantial innovation in modern professional photographic aesthetics is inevitable given the increase of client interaction in co-creating brands (Morton, 2017). When consumers are exposed to a brand-related song, this experience intensifies the listener's ability to recall the characteristics and brand inherent qualities (Florack, Dimofte, Rössler, Leder, 2012). Client's lives are filled with background music and these sound-based cues serve in part as an auditory trigger to an individual's past and recalled at a later brand induced time

(Fraser, 2014). Evidence exists supporting music's ability to support word recall and justification to expect musical tune recollection from an advertisement (Wallace, 1991).

I created visually animated and stylized still-shot compositions of the alphorn and Presto Kombucha products with relevant visual and auditory highlights. I created a special aesthetic experience for my clients by composing a series of nine uniquely stylized and brief cinematic video advertising campaigns with motion design in *Blender*. Each video presentation contains one still shot photograph animated for ninety frames and three seconds total duration. Each photograph was plotted in the appropriate software and the photographs were edited to adjust depth of field, visual blemishes, lighting inconsistencies, context, continuity and style. Sound tracks were paired with the photographs after the visual work was completed.

It is becoming necessary for brands to share photographs in order to contribute, experience and connect with modern and future social media paradigms. Pictures on prominent social media platforms are fundamentally changing the social media environment altogether (Russman and Svensson, 2017). The past decade has brought on an implied optimism for social media and journalism, while clearly significant social issues and problems remain (Lewis and Molyneux, 2018). Online brand communities might help marketers understand client needs and help to encourage loyalty and involvement with a brand (Casaló, Flavián, and Guinalíu, 2008).

I have shared the dissertation advertisements created for my company on social media platforms and on [www.prestokombucha.com](http://www.prestokombucha.com). Commercial marketers and advertisers utilize sound to communicate brand values, engage listeners, tell a story, connect with and encourage clients to post content, share stories and increase the bottom

line. As a company founder, it is my responsibility to ensure that my brand values are communicated to my clients. It is a wonderful time to record and share alphorn media files for Presto Kombucha. Recording improvised alphorn tracks, and combining the sound of the alphorn with beautiful video enhanced still images helps my clients better identify, connect and value the Presto Kombucha brand experience. Part of my dissertation volition was inspired by my desire to learn how to make my own video advertisements for Presto Kombucha. I feel that this experience has served me well as I expand my online marketing content creation and improve online brand connection with clients and partners.

## CHAPTER 4

### RESULTS AND PRODUCT

The primary focus of this dissertation project was to produce original professional marketing content from start to finish and share my content online. My prior experience creating digital advertisements and content for my business gave me the confidence that I would be able to learn the many skills required for completing this project. The extensive learning that took place while planning and preparing for the project gave me a solid foundation of creative ideas from which to be inspired. The outcome of ultimately producing nine brief product advertisements for my company and gathering feedback continues to inspire me to create new content in the future. The confidence that I earned from completing systematic academic writing content for the advertisements in addition to all of the intricacies of producing excellent visual and auditory files will serve me in the future as I continue to create original content for my businesses.

The creation of online marketing materials for Presto Kombucha is a landmark achievement for the company. The marketing content provides a valuable touch point between clients, the public and the beverage brand. For Presto Kombucha, video marketing content communicates important values of the brand and makes clear that excellent marketing material is important and a part of the brand identity progressing forward. On a personal level, the completion of the photographs and videos documents my progress creating artistic and musical works of value for purposes of marketing my business. The decision to produce the content from start to finish demanded a commitment to the project and to my brand. From start to finish, the following chapter describes the process of completing the marketing content. Important production variables are discussed including pre-image bottle preparation and planning, preparing the photography space, the photography completion process, editing, successes and failures, finalizing and future requirements.

### **Foam Board and Plexiglas**

In order to most effectively photograph the bottles, I devised a simple bottle staging area comprised of pieces of black and white foam board and Plexiglas. A goal was to capture the final image in camera with minimal digital processing. Another goal was to produce a consistent appearance across the series of photographs. I purchased blackout paper and taped this over the window in my room. I installed a black curtain in front of the room window and blocked the doorway so that no ambient light would reflect on the bottle. The bottles were essentially placed in an open rectangle box comprised of a top and two sides composed of black foam board. The bottom piece of foam board was white and was covered with the Plexiglas in order to give a beautiful shiny appearance

and shadow at the bottom front of each bottle. There was one large piece of white foam board that lay at the back of the bottles. The large white foam board provided a means to bounce the light from the rear speedlite and to cast a white glow through the glass bottle and over the entire visual composition.

### **Bottle Preparation Process**

I intentionally photographed the final bottle photographs with each respective liquid kombucha beverage profile in the bottle. During creation, I completed hundreds of rough draft photograph images that had no liquid in the bottles. As I contrasted the images with and without liquid, I noticed that there was a significant difference in overall visual impact of the finished beverage filled images. The images that contained beverages appeared and felt more animated, alive and interesting than the images without liquid beverages in them. This is in part due to the constantly changing contents of the living kombucha beverage. I managed to capture beautiful S.C.O.B.Y. (See Appendix A) particles in the photographs. Texture laden kombucha liquids look visually different depending on the beverage, S.C.O.B.Y. composition and ingredients of the profile.

The nine bottles used in the advertisements were screen printed without any text on the backside of the bottle, in order to make the images look cleaner and clearer than they otherwise appear. Professional bottle stylists and photographers will often remove a paper bottle label or create a custom piece of paper to place over any rear facing text in order to eliminate distracting shadows and lines from the main focus of the front of the bottle. Bright studio lights can create distracting shadows, lines and visual fragments that might detract from an otherwise polished final image. In order to eliminate unnecessary

visual noise in the image, the nine bottles were only allowed to be screen printed on the front side of the bottle and were cured in the bottle oven especially for this project.

The bottles were each filled with the actual kombucha pictured. For example, Blueberry Oolong actually contained Blueberry Oolong kombucha in the bottle for the photo. For this dissertation project, I intended to photograph and present each beverage profile in a real to life fashion. The beverage filled bottles appeared to add visual color, weight and breadth of light affecting line quality, shape and life in the photographic images. The photographs of the bottles without liquid appeared to look less interesting overall and it was a significant milestone to realize this fact and to adjust my photo-taking paradigm to include kombucha. The liquid kombucha was chilled and allowed to settle overnight. The S.C.O.B.Y. cultures in the bottles were allowed to naturally settle and one may see the S.C.O.B.Y. gently resting on the bottom of the bottle or even floating in a suspended manner in several of the photographs. In order to portray a sense of spontaneity throughout the photographic series, I allowed minor inconsistencies and irregularities to shine through in the photographs. One may observe a mild fading of white light in the background projecting behind the top of the bottle as seen in figure 1. In the final images, I airbrushed the fade of light to the bright white from the bottom of the bottle utilizing an eyedropper and digital soft flow airbrush. Both images look good and some photographers might choose to edit the photographs further.



Fig. 1 *Unedited bottle*

The photograph in Figure 1 was taken with my homemade hardware store lighting setup (including lighting snoot) and without any liquid kombucha in the bottle. It is my hope that the reader gets a realistic impression that most of the other unfilled bottles had a similarly “empty” bottle look and feel to them without the liquid kombucha. One may easily observe the extreme lighting and color inconsistencies in this photograph and also

observe that the photo is lightly edited and mostly straight from the camera with minimal digital adjustments completed in the Hasselblad *Phocus* software. There are multiple shadows and inconsistencies in the bottle because of a lack of a suitable staging environment. The color is uneven partly because I was hand holding an LED shop light as my main front light and the overly bright white in the light was blowing out the red in the ink. Aside from the fixed size of my self-made flash snoot, I was unable to adjust the zoom focus or photon intensity of the do-it-yourself light (See Appendix A). The snoot was used to focus the light (much like an orchestra performance stage spotlight) on the center logo of the bottle. Even though I invested several weeks of work locating do-it-yourself light options from my home and from the hardware store, I ultimately abandoned the do-it-yourself lighting path and invested in a radio flash transmitter for my camera with two radio controlled off camera speedlites to complete this creative project. One may observe several remaining blemishes in the photograph above that could be removed with airbrushing; several abrupt reflections from the light and reflections from the bottle itself could be improved with an improved staging and scene composition including foam board diffusers and Plexiglas. The unfilled bottle has a different visual feel than other images in this series in part due to a lack of beverage filling-in and smoothing the shadow in the bottle. Every part of the image presentation looks different and is changed when each individual bottle is filled with liquid and prepared as indicated herein.





Fig. 2 *Sunset marketing campaign*

The Blueberry Oolong photograph as shown above was taken without any liquid kombucha in the bottle, and hand painted effects completed in *Corel Painter*. This photograph was taken with the homemade lighting setup with Snoot. Although the colors are not consistent or accurate with the real world colors, I feel that the overall impact is worthwhile. In order to complete this commercial marketing content, I invested several hours of airbrushing time. I removed the blowout lighting points that the hardware store

LED lights produced. I removed ample dust and contaminants that were revealed in the photograph, even though I had wiped and cleaned the bottle just before placing the bottle in the bottle staging area. The Hasselblad is capable of recording an extraordinary amount of detail. I find the colors and line that the Hasselblad produces mesmerizing. I removed the centerline that appeared at the bottom of the bottle, and left two of the lines on the left and right side as observable in the photograph. Consequently, this is a surrealist inspired photograph and brand advertisement. I seek to communicate positivity and vibrancy in this image. I raised the EV (See Appendix A), filled in shadows and general compositional brightness in the photo using Hasselblad *Phocus*. I sharpened the lens digitally in the Hasselblad *Phocus* software. I adjusted the white balance using a QP card and digital eyedropper. I used an eyedropper to collect color from the screen printed ink, and I used a medium width digital airbrush to abstractly and loosely airbrush color over the white background. I published this marketing content to social media during sunset hours of February 3, 2020, Eastern Standard Time, USA, paired with an abstract digital painting entitled *Sunset*. I did not know at creation that I was going to use this painted sketch as an advertisement, however, after I saw the completed Blueberry Oolong sketch, I thought to insert the prestokombucha text into the bottom right of the sunset and publish the work alongside the Blueberry Oolong composition. The image depicts a southern California Pacific Ocean sunset as I remember it from a business trip to southern California in May 2019. After posting this content, I received the following favorable results for Presto Kombucha. One of my favorite brands of kombucha called Revive Kombucha followed the Presto Kombucha page on Instagram, February 3, 2020. This is an impressive multi-million dollar operation in California. An admirably successful brand

called Humm Kombucha from Oregon followed Presto Kombucha on February 4, 2020, and this is a multi-million dollar brand based in Bend, Oregon. I feel amazing to receive this attention and respect, and I am honored to report these social media results in my dissertation.

### **Speedlites and Flash Trigger**

Investing in a radio controlled Flashpoint *R2 Pro Mark II* trigger and a pair of manual Godox *TT600* speedlites provided one of the best camera equipment solutions imaginable for this creative project. Prior to purchasing the remote trigger and speedlites, my capacity for producing studio grade photographs was significantly diminished, inconsistent and incomplete. The time that it took to research and setup the do-it-yourself equipment was significant. I learned an extraordinary amount about studio lighting glass bottles from my failures with the homemade lighting approach. When it came time to capturing the photographs with the do-it-yourself equipment, I handheld an awkward light fixture and snoot, manually pointed the light precisely at each bottle logo and set a timer on the camera to take the photo. The bulbs had a fixed wattage and brightness, and I ended up trying several different wattage draw LED light bulbs until I found one with enough lumens to match my snoot. Because the LED bulbs had a fixed wattage, I had to hand hold them at precisely the same distance and angle for every single photo, and that proved challenging. In hindsight, I could have made this setup work better had I used stands to support the light fixtures. These stands would be an additional expense and item to consider for future projects. The camera timer allowed the camera to take each photograph without shaking the tripod or consequently providing shake to the image itself. After several hours of taking photographs in this fashion, I would become

exhausted from holding the light and moving around repeatedly during the photo session. Despite my focused and laborious efforts, I was discouraged from my results because I was experiencing significant color inaccuracies and difficulty retaining an accurate portrayal of the original color from the bottles. I became aware of my project deficiencies and devised problem-solving solutions through the creation process itself.

The radio trigger and speedlites certainly made the photographic process more consistent, pleasing and enjoyable. I was finally able to record images without manually holding homemade lights. With professional equipment, I now have the ability to adjust the flash intensity remotely without touching or disrupting the actual flash units whatsoever. Lighting consistency can prove remarkably efficient in commercial bottle photographic applications because of good lighting placement and resulting time saved in setup and execution of a series of photographs. Consistency allows excellent photographs to be recorded without senseless manual labor and inferior technology or creative workflow wasting valuable time in the photography studio.

The Flashpoint trigger is designed for a Canon camera body; however, I found that this trigger works well on my H series Hasselblad camera body. Because the majority of H series Hasselblad medium format digital cameras are no longer in production, I extensively researched the most up to date used and compatible flash options that were available on the market. I wanted to purchase a basic wireless system to achieve my goals for my creative project. A real problem existed in locating exactly what equipment might and might not work with my camera. I took a risk ordering a new wireless trigger that was recently developed for Canon cameras, and allowed a series of wireless flashes and strobe lights to be added at a later time. I feel that my decision to

purchase the Flashpoint trigger enabled me to utilize some of the finest photographic equipment available on the market today, and to enjoy the future ability to add more remote flashes and studio lights to my existing setup without purchasing another trigger. The trigger mounts on the camera hot shoe and the speedlites mount remotely from stands. The trigger and the speedlite operate from AA batteries. The speedlites have built-in wireless remote sensors that allow them to be remotely controlled and synced directly from a trigger mounted on the hot shoe of the camera body. Each flash is independently adjustable in power and has a 20-200mm adjustable lens zoom for focusing the light beam. I fitted the front light with a spherical lambency light diffuser. The diffuser helped to soften the light, and I feel added a desirable glow to the light versus without the diffuser. The zoom of the front light was set to 135mm. The angle of the front light was set to 45 degrees. The front speedlite was placed on the floor a couple of feet in front of the bottle and light intensity was adjusted accordingly. The rear light had a stock rectangular diffuser, a 60 degree angle and the zoom was set at 20mm in order to emit the broadest and biggest light beam across the background as possible. The rear speedlite was placed on the floor a couple of feet behind the bottle and light intensity was adjusted accordingly.

### **Airbrushing the Images**

Airbrushing the final images in Corel *Painter* was an important part of the workflow process. In total, a minimum of forty hours airbrush time was invested in the nine completed images. I invested on average between four and five hours of airbrush time on each final image from rough draft to completion. In order to develop a workflow for my photographs, I carefully considered and planned for the workflow process

between all of the software that I utilized for the project. As with any visual composition that I complete, there comes a time when I must surrender and release my work to the public for enjoyment and critique. I understand that these photographs are imperfect, that there are various blemishes, inconsistencies and imperfections that exist in the images. I understand that art evaluation is a subjective process. I reached a point in the visual creation process that I enjoy looking at the images, I enjoy the appearance of the images and the images feel complete. This is the subjective process and paradigm that I currently use to determine that it is time to share creative commercial marketing content with others.

I individually wiped each bottle with a lint-free paper towel before shooting. I still had a tremendous amount of bottle blemishes and inconsistencies to smooth out with the airbrush in order to take the image clarity to an acceptable level. Because the liquid was cold when I took the bottle out of the refrigerator, I wiped the bottle quickly and recorded photographs efficiently. I left some of the visible condensation on the bottles when appropriate, and I cleaned the bottles prior to shooting with a manual air powered dust-cleaning bulb, a Giottos *Rocket-Air* bulb designed for use in cleaning camera lenses in the field. I first used traditional air brushing techniques in my visual art in the 1990's. I have completed countless digitally airbrushed photographs and visual compositions since I first painted and air brushed digitally in 2012, and this accumulated experience helped guide me and served as a foundation for creation through out the completion of this creative project. I enjoy looking at bold and refined beverage advertisements.

The Corel Painter software is one of the finest raster based digital painting software programs available on the market in 2020. The familiarity, colors available,

brushes, techniques and layout are part of what make Corel Painter one of my favorite programs to create visual art and marketing content. The program has a beautiful built in image compression algorithm that I used to compress the final still images for this project. Corel Painter links seamlessly with a Wacom Tablet and Wacom Digital Airbrush and continues to serve as part of my workflow for producing commercial digital, visual and marketing content. The Wacom tablet plugs into the computer via a USB connection, and similar tablets offer strictly wireless connection options. The Wacom airbrush communicates with the tablet wirelessly and basic components of digital art creation are available including a massive variety of drawing, inking and painting mediums, the ability to digitally adjust pressure, line width, line quality, color, transparency, opacity and more. The software allows a visual artist to work digitally with countless traditional drawing and painting mediums all while keeping ones hands clean. This sort of content creation was previously impossible without modern digital equipment. Whereas, over twenty years ago I first airbrushed a sketch with an air compressor and traditional airbrush, I completed a portion of my doctoral work airbrushing digitally.

The bottles all ended up having more lint, free flying dust and general room dust than I originally planned or hoped. This simply required me to invest more of my time airbrushing than I had originally planned. I would often rotate between using the digital soft flow airbrush, digital airbrush and 1-pixel airbrush settings to clean the images. I set the digital wheel control on the airbrush to adjust the width of the line with the turn of the airbrush wheel so that I could quickly adjust the line width and line quality to reflect the requirements of the image. I kept my opacity at 100% and would change my airbrush tool

to match the requirements of the texture in the image. I enjoy using the airbrush wheel to quickly adjust the line width throughout any visual composition in real time. I work in layers when necessary. The software allows one to temporarily and permanently block out layers in order to produce a final image series that meets the requirements of any digital art project. Additionally, working in layers allows multiple secondary sub-images to contribute to a single master image as desired. I planned ahead of time to airbrush and remove multiple white light blowout points that were on the front of every bottle from the speedlights. I removed lighting highlights that distracted from otherwise smooth and linear lines in the image. I used the eyedropper tool to select desirable colors from the bottle, and chose the best airbrush options in order to mask and connect the lines in as fluid and as realistic manner as possible. I took a photo of a QP white card, and I digitally adjusted the white balance of each photo with the eyedropper tool to match the white in the QP card. Despite the complexity of the workflow process listed herein, I always strove to maintain an overall sense of spontaneity and fluidity in the images for my clients. I intend to convey a cinematic and relaxing experience for clients to enjoy when they view the photographic presentations. I chose to include and leave some of the irregularities and imperfections because I enjoy looking at them and they make the images feel authentic. Capturing image detail in the Hasselblad is a truly extraordinary experience. For instance, one may observe an irregularity in the glass bottle for the Orange Jasmine photograph. A diagonal line appears across the bottle and is likely a result of an inconsistency in the glass production process from the bottle manufacturer. Similarly, one may observe a diagonal line that spreads across the unedited Cherry Vanilla bottle pictured in Figure 1. I find beauty in the visual and tactile imperfections of the mass-produced manufactured



glass because they are all one of a kind. I chose to leave several of the visual imperfections instead of airbrushing because I feel that imperfections are an integral element for any creative process.

### **Video Software**

Each image was placed into an exceptional freeware (See Appendix A) video editing software program called *Blender*. The software offers a platform to freely create an unlimited amount of video and sound effects and effectively combines them into a video format.

My 2012 MacBook Air computer was bogged down from all of the digital art files, images, image editing, software demands, sound editing, software updates and fees associated with acquiring this equipment. I am running a vintage *OSX Yosemite Version 10.10.5 Operating System* on my computer in 2020. I was unable to download several freeware video-editing programs available on the market today due to my computer having an inadequate operating system for the demands of the software. *Blender* is unique because the creators offer software versions previously developed available for download for anybody who requires an earlier version. I uploaded an outdated version of *Blender 2.71* so that my computer operating system did not require an update while finishing my creative project. Updating a computer operating system might become a laborious and risky task, and it is always recommended to back-up an entire computer and all files before completing an operating system install or update. Modern freeware programs are often extraordinarily and elaborately crafted, capable of producing industry standard results, and freeware is free of monetary cost. It is almost unbelievable that one may freely download sophisticated video editing software using any Internet connection,

however, this maxim reveals the abundance of the world that we live in today. I initially planned on using the Adobe online suite subscription that I have subscribed to for several years, however, I decided to take a risk and migrate my workflow to another software suite to avoid the annual subscription fees that Adobe commands for subscription software. I am grateful for the countless hours that I have invested working in the Adobe Creative Cloud Suite from 2014-2019. I used my past work in the Adobe suite to provide a foundation for exploring and learning the new freeware based digital video editing software for completing my dissertation work. Freeware is miraculous in that it is updated frequently. Users of freeware contribute to a society of freeware users and software development professionals by collectively contributing to improve the software offerings in future versions. It is worthy to note that the Hasselblad *Phocus* software is freeware.

### **Blender**

Blender provided an excellent video editing software platform for this creative project. The Blender software is available free of charge. I feel Blender offers limitless creative possibilities for an artist. I feel that Blender is a suitable software program for commercial marketing professionals to invest time exploring and utilizing.

In order to complete this creative project, I first required an artistic goal and vision to guide my volition. I conceptualized and imagined a rough sketch of the animated videos before I learned how to complete the project in the software. I have been studying pencil drawn animation for several years, and I understood some of the basic principals of animation before beginning the project. I used my knowledge gained from studying great studio animators like Richard Williams and others to inspire me to keep

failing the process of artistic adversity. These creative project videos are the first commercial video advertisements that I have produced.

In order to begin, I captured and processed the highest quality photographic images that I could possibly produce. I meditated for several years to prepare myself emotionally, psychologically and to manage the mental stress of releasing this commercial marketing content to the public.

Once I felt that I had captured a suitable image, I moved on with the next step in the process, always making adjustments and refinements whenever they were necessary. Some days felt slow and tedious. Some days felt remarkably productive and fruitful. Nonetheless, I kept taking daily action and developed a remarkable attitude for dealing with failure from my thousands of failed attempts at tangible success with this creative project.

File size was an important variable to consider even before I began the process. I required manageable file sizes or I would not be able to process the animation frames on my vintage computer platform.

Each video is composed of ninety frames, thirty frames per second and three seconds total in duration.

I opened the Blender software and set my view to 3D in the View tab, double clicked on the center square and pressed X on my keyboard and deleted the square. Double clicked on the circle and pressed X on my keypad and deleted the circle to the right of the square. Double clicked on the camera and pressed the space bar. Typed align into the search box and clicked align camera to view. With my mouse kept inside the 3D view box I pressed shift A. Clicked on the Mesh tab, clicked on Images as Planes and

clicked on my desired image. Clicked on viewport shading (solid circle) box and clicked on texture. This past step made the image seeable for the first time in the process thus far. Pressed and held down the S button and used one finger on my computer mouse pad to enlarge the item to the camera view box. I always made certain that my image filled the camera view box for any of my zoom adjustments. Clicked on frame one, clicked the I button on the keyboard and clicked on LocRotScale button on frame one. Pressed and held down the S button and used one finger on my computer mouse pad to zoom toward the image until I found a suitable gaze cue (subjective) to stop the animation. Clicked on frame sixty (the beginning of the third-second of my three second video animation). Next, clicked the I button on the keyboard and clicked on LocRotScale button for frame two. At this point, the animating portion of the work was completed aside from a few more adjustments in the back end including rendering. I rendered the output of the video to H. 264. Selected the Quicktime format with a Bitrate of 9,000 and changed the maximum rate to 0. At this point, saved my original Blender file as a backup. I clicked on the Render box and clicked OpenGL Render Animation. The computer processed the images into a sequence one frame at a time. After completing the three-second advertisements, my outdated computer and 8GB of RAM were able to effectively process the visual rendering relatively effortlessly. The computer processor would slow whenever running all nine of the animations simultaneously. The software crashed several times throughout the completion process. The software is intricately developed and it took me several weeks of work in the program until I understood that occasionally some of the workflow problems originated in the software and computer interaction itself. I made certain to keep all of my work as organized as possible, saved the work to my desktop

and created folders to organize all of the files. For every video that I produced, I saved 1.) .blend file, 2.) .jpg, and 3.) .mov file. I tested the final files, and double-checked that my files fully saved before moving onto the next video in the series.

### **Audio Recording**

Recording the audio outdoors for this creative project proved rewarding and challenging. I found a beautiful recording location at Proud Lake State Recreation Area near Milford, Michigan on the outskirts of suburban Detroit. I located a suitable recording setting nearby a beautiful Marshland that lies along the Huron River. A forest of hardwoods, hiking trails, wildlife and natural beauty abound. I located a hill, placed my back to it and pointed the alphorn directly southeast toward Downtown Detroit. There is a beautiful echo and ambiance to this outdoor location for alphorn playing. The alphorn sound reverberates along with all of the gorgeous Michigan hardwoods in the location. After playing a loud tone on the alphorn, one may hear the sound decay for several seconds. I feel like I am playing in a massive outdoor concert hall at this location. The sound carries for several seconds over the water and through the forest. In this environment, one may occasionally hear undesired noise pollution: a commercial airplane headed to Detroit Metropolitan Airport, the beeping sound from distant construction trucks backing-up, a muffler from a distant vehicle, the rustling of an occasional wind gust against the microphone diaphragms. The noise pollution is not constant and the setting is suitable for my recording purposes. Temperatures outside were cold for the field recording. My hands and feet were numb from playing outside for so many hours; a genuine alphorn induced trance.

Several of my initial sound recording attempts failed because of software and environmental challenges. The alphorn arguably sounds best outdoors, and I felt that it was important to record the excerpts outdoors. I regularly play and prepare indoors and I take that musical energy outdoors. There are countless places that would have worked well for the recording environment, however, I needed to find a place free of noise contamination (cars, airplanes, modern society) and complete the recording accordingly. I recorded the excerpts in early March 2020 and the weather in Detroit was fluctuating between high winds and snow and a calmly transitioning spring. Sporadic warmer weather and direct sunshine were welcome catalysts to complete the recording process. I checked the weather regularly, and I got outside and completed the sound recording when the weather permitted. I often found mornings to work well for outdoor recording in this location.

The equipment used for the sound recording process included a 2012 MacBook Air, a Focusrite Forte USB interface, a stereo pair of Neumann KM-184 microphones with windsocks, a Manfrotto 5001B Nano Stand with a Sabra-Som Microphone T Support and a Denecke PS-2 nine-volt battery phantom power supply for the pair of microphones.

The sound recording software used for the recording was Audacity. The video recording software was Blender and NCH Software's *Videopad*. I learned all of the software ahead of time and went to the field to get to work. I adjusted the microphone settings in the digital interfaces of the Focusrite *Forte* and Audacity programs.

With the cold weather, my computer battery demonstrated a limited power holding capacity and I recorded efficiently and effectively. I had less than an hour

recording time for any recording session and had to make my time outdoors as efficient as possible. I took five takes of each recorded excerpt and listened to them after the recording was completed. I recorded each session uninterrupted with the computer turned on and recording. I relaxed myself as thoroughly as possible, and I enjoyed the sound recording process tremendously.

I placed the microphones on a hill about five feet directly behind my body and pointed them towards the distant Michigan hardwood marshland. I pointed the left microphone around 45 degrees to the left, and I placed the right microphone around 45 degrees to the right. I set the Manfrotto stand with the widest stance possible so that the wind would not blow the microphones over. I adjusted the stand height to as short as possible to help reinforce the microphone stand against gusts of wind. I have tried countless microphone settings and this is the setting that worked best for me for the project and how I wish to convey the alphorn sound for this creative project. Some alphorn-playing musicians might record themselves with the microphones pointed directly in front of the bell, and some might record with a different microphone pattern and placement altogether. These are the settings that sounded best to me with my project goals and in this constant weather changing outdoor location.

I recorded solid tracks and later returned to edit the sound files. I normalized the sound files to -.3 because they were simply too soft otherwise. I used fade-in and fade-out on any of the tracks that needed the sound to be smoothed. I adjusted the tempo to 3.33 seconds whenever I had a track that was longer than 3 seconds.

For the video and sound combination, I opened the Videopad software, clicked on the Clip header and add file. Completed silent .mov files were added for each video.

Completed sound file improvisations were analyzed and were inserted with the files that most closely matched the image and beverage profile that I pre-visualized in my mind. The sound files were all improvised within the parameters that were established at the beginning of the project. I received inspiration for the files from my imagination and from listening to years of alphorn music and symphonic orchestral music. Composers such as Beethoven, Brahms, Bruckner, Britten, Leopold and Wolfgang Mozart filled my head with inspiration. Traditional Swiss folk melodies and the alphorn tunes and melodies from Gassmann served as a foundation for expression. Once a three second silent video was in the software cue, I clicked the Clip header and inserted the sound files. Files were exported as .mp3 files at 320kbps. Throughout the entire creation process, I remained conscious of the file sizes and had no choice other than compressing the images and sound files for this creative project. Data was saved in multiple visual and auditory file formats. Multiple software and hardware programs were used in my creative workflow.





Fig. 3 *Ginger*



Fig. 4 *Lavender Hops*



Fig. 5 *Blueberry Oolong*



Fig. 6 *Cherry Vanilla*



Fig. 7 *Espresso*



Fig. 8 *Orange Jasmine*



Fig. 9 *Rose*





Fig. 10 *Lemon Lime*





Fig. 11 *Original*



Fig. 12 *QP Card*

## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSION

The alphorn is a unique solo instrument when used for recording commercial beverage advertisements. Creative musicians might choose to produce commercial marketing content in an original and systematic fashion. As a business manager, I choose to include the alphorn in multiple concise and effective brand marketing campaigns. Creative artistic content is an excellent vehicle for communicating vibrant brand values to clients.

#### **Project Summary**

As outlined in Chapter 1, nine original musical videos featuring solo alphorn were recorded and shared on [www.prestokombucha.com](http://www.prestokombucha.com) and related social media platforms. I undertook all aspects of creating, recording, editing, lighting, photographing, animating, airbrushing and stylizing the musical videos. I created and designed a beverage brand, developed award winning recipes, screen printed glass bottles, registered the trademark and promoted my brand throughout the business creation process.

Chapter 2 outlines relevant research for the creative project. A historical analysis of social media reveals a rich history dating back to the times of Marcus Cicero and the ancient Egyptians. Modern social media is a communicative vehicle with origins in the communicative systems and mediums of ancient times.

Digital advertising offers exciting and dynamic commercial marketing opportunities for an artist. Through the use of a computer and a primitive alphorn, modern horn players may connect freely with clients and communicate brand values through artistic expression.

Chapter 3 details my artistic creation process for this dissertation project. By utilizing a computer and relevant digital tools, I created nine animated product advertisements for my beverage brand. The content has received positive feedback and shares from businesses and individuals online. The content creates value for my business and communicates brand values with businesses and clients.

Studio photography setup, bottle preparation, photographic development, studio flash, digital airbrushing, software creation workflow, and other intricate creative details are covered in Chapter 4. I discuss my brand's online interaction with multi-million dollar west coast kombucha brands. I discuss my workflow and how I completed every step of the video creation process. I discuss some of the difficulties, successes, failures and journey that I experienced during the creation of this project. I share freeware programs that anybody may use to create his or her own commercial brand advertisements. I discuss the importance of goals and demonstrate how one may effectively strategize in order to systematically produce professional commercial marketing content. I share my recording setup and details of the Detroit based outdoor recording location. I detail the audio recording equipment used and some of the computer software challenges that I met throughout the project. I offer insight on my photographic equipment, lenses, tripod, video and audio compression. I offer suggestions for saving people time for creating brand marketing content.

### **Significance**

The marketing content created for this project is proving valuable for the image of my beverage brand. Other musicians and artists might find ideas and inspiration for creating marketing content from reviewing the content of this creative project. I

demonstrate that it is possible to plan and execute a massive series of strategic and systematic creative processes in the culmination of nine commercial beverage advertisements. This creative project might be utilized by commercial artists, musicians, marketers and content creators; thus providing a basic framework for content creation.

### **Suggestions**

The photographic images in this creative project were created with a Hasselblad HC100mm f2.2 lens, ISO 100 with an aperture of f12 and a shutter speed of eight seconds. I chose an aperture of f12 because I wanted the entire image to be in focus. A standard aperture starting point of f8 worked and looked great, however, I felt that tightening the aperture allowed me to sharpen the images and add line clarity and sharpness to the images. ISO was kept at 100 in order to produce a clean image with the least amount of image noise possible. I would suggest that artists practice taking photographs at different apertures and settings, observe the results and stay true to his or her volition and goals when finishing and publishing marketing content. In order to achieve this goal most effectively, one might produce a list of written photography related goals and get to work.

Because I was taking photographs in a dark room with an ISO of 100, speedlites and chose an f12 aperture with a Hasselblad HC100mm prime lens, I used a slow (eight second) shutter speed to allow enough light onto the camera sensor to produce the final images. I tethered the Hasselblad camera to my computer via Thunderbolt cable adaptor, and I took the photographs by pressing a button on my computer. This process helped my workflow significantly partly because I avoided camera shake from manually pressing the camera trigger. Capturing images from the laptop helped me to avoid setting the built

in timer on the Hasselblad before every single photograph. The tethered camera helped me to enjoy the creation process, and allowed me to see the images directly on my computer screen instead of the built in camera viewfinder.

I utilized a tripod in order to produce a clean image with a slow shutter speed. The tripod allowed me to keep the camera from moving or shaking. The Manfrotto *055MF3 Carbon Fiber Tripod* proved indispensable for completing this creative project. I made certain to keep the tripod in the same location throughout the entire series of photographs. I used a tripod ballhead produced by Linhof called a *Profi II Ballhead*. The Linhof ballhead offers extraordinary control of a tripod-mounted camera, and allows the camera to effectively and rapidly position itself in limitless vertical and horizontal positions for any composition. The ballhead offers a beautiful smooth motion and can rapidly lock in limitless camera holding positions. Attached to the ballhead was an Arca-Swiss style quick release plate crafted by Really Right Stuff. The quick release plate offers rapid adjustment options for the vertical and horizontal positioning of the camera on the tripod and all with the pulling or locking of a single lever. The Hasselblad camera body was fitted with an L-Plate adaptor from Really Right Stuff.

The RAW and unedited image files from the Hasselblad H5D-40 medium format digital camera can reach in excess of 50 megabits in size. RAW images are uncompressed and are generally desired by professional studio photographers because they may be saved separately and utilized when an image or project needs further editing, future image adjustments or project changes are necessary, when called upon to produce fine art archival printing for a client, commercial printing and for building studio equity. Compressed images are necessary for the Internet, and I had no choice aside from

compressing my final image files to an acceptable size for the Internet. The images were compressed once in *Painter* and once in *Blender*. During this process of image compression, I inevitably lost some of the detail and quality that I invested so many hours to create. Professional photographers will often choose to record exclusively RAW images in his or her camera. A workflow including RAW images requires an enormous amount of data storage and computer-processing power, however, yields a priceless peace of mind knowing that I may go back to any original image in the future and make any necessary adjustments for my businesses without loss of image quality. I used the compression algorithm in the Corel *Painter* software because that program is designed for digital fine art production, and I was seeking to produce the maximum image quality and detail possible for this creative project. *Blender* compresses the image in order to create and process a multiple image sequence into a finished video animation file.

The marketing content that I have posted to date has all been unpaid and organic. I decided to keep the content traffic organic for the time being, even though I am planning to pay for boosting some of this future content online in order to reach more people. Bootstrapping a business comes with many challenges and one challenge is budgeting for marketing expenses. Marketing and content creation is certainly one of the most important components for countless business models. I have received excellent feedback on much of my organically posted marketing content to date.

Entrepreneurs should prepare for anything whatsoever to happen at any time. Develop plasticity with a strategy-based approach to everything possible. Goal setting and strategy are two separate processes and must be viewed as such. Goals are necessary and strategy is the starting point for tangible value creation. Plan ahead in writing,

understanding that a poorly executed strategy is probably going to yield more than simply setting a goal without planning a strategy for a goals completion. Daily writing or typing is the starting point for achieving goals and creating value. Data was systematically backed-up throughout the completion of this creative project.

I would recommend familiarizing oneself with all hardware and software required before going into the field to record. I would recommend typing a workflow down on paper so that artistic goals may be assessed, explored and completed. When recording, long uninterrupted tracks often helped me to focus on the demands of playing and performing alphorn instead of sound or video editing while playing. I recommend checking the normalization requirements for online platforms ahead of recording time. Social media platforms apply a compression algorithm to media content as part of the uploading process. Video and audio compression makes an online multimedia experience possible and allows content to be downloaded and uploaded efficiently and effectively.

### **Teamwork**

I would encourage any individual who is interested in developing an entrepreneurial lifestyle to reflect on his or her volition for pursuing this path. What are your goals for becoming an entrepreneur? Do you want to work primarily by yourself or work with a team dependent service approach? What problems are you solving and who are your clients? Who is your team and are you developing the strategy and strength that it requires to follow through with team-based solutions for unique problems?



**Future Plans**

I plan to continue to produce and share artistic content online and in various print and media formats in order to communicate the Presto Kombucha brand values with others. I will produce systematic artistic content for my brands, for my clients and partners. I immediately plan to compose and record solo alphorn tracks in the Michigan wilderness and combine digital audio with animation, commercial photography, digital painting and creative content. I am pleased to share that I have been invited to present alphorn research at the International Horn Society Symposium in Eugene, Oregon in August, 2020.

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## APPENDIX A

## List of terms and definitions

**Aesthetic:** Mathematician George D. Birkhoff developed a measure that may be applied to an object and a subjective rating may be applied to collect data and to assign a numerical score to an otherwise descriptive item (Douchová, 2015)

**Blue Ocean Strategy:** A strategy whereas a brand creates new demand, enters new market space and consequently creates a new and unique situation for significant growth and profit (Kim and Mauborgne, 2005)

**Crossmodal Action:** Simultaneously coordinating the demands of multiple endeavors (Huestegge and Hazeltine, 2011)

**Crossmodal Experience:** For purposes of this creative project, a crossmodal experience is a subjective experience involving more than one simultaneous sensory input

**EV:** Exposure Value

**Freeware:** Software that is open-source, freely available and in the public domain

**Improvisation:** Improvisation is a living practice (Schick, 2012)

**Medium Format Photography:** Medium format historically refers to the film size utilized in the venerable Hasselblad V System. Medium format cameras provide an opportunity for a detailed capture of light and a wide dynamic range that is often desired in product photography, digital fine art and advanced image editing paradigms (Hasselblad, 2019)

**Papyrus Rolls:** Papyrus rolls produced from the Papyrus plant were used for thousands of years before modern paper techniques were invented (Mark, 2016)

**®: (Registered Trademark)** A registered legal protective value designation that is earned from completing a systematic legal application process (USPTO, 2019)

**S.C.O.B.Y.:** A Symbiotic Collection of Bacteria and Yeast as found in raw unpasteurized kombucha

**Serigraphy: (Screen Printing)** is the process of using a screen mesh and a stencil to release ink onto a given substrate (Abbott, 2008)

**Snoot: (Photography)** A tool used to direct and focus light on an object

**TM: (Trademark)** A legal protective designation that is often placed on products to identify brand value in the market (USPTO, 2019)

Vertical Integration: Vertical integration exists when several components of a supply chain are controlled by a merchant (Turk, 2015)

Volition: The capacity for humans and others to take action based on an intrinsic motivational paradigm rather than an extrinsic motivational paradigm (Haggard & Lau, 2013)